

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

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December 20, 1977

FOR RELEASE ON RECEIPT:
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The Cleveland Museum of Art's annual exhibition of new acquisitions, the Year in Review, opens at the Museum on December 28, 1977, for viewing through January 22, 1978. Visitors to the exhibition will note that while some outstanding purchases were made, many significant works among the more than 150 objects acquired in 1977 were gifts.

A major addition to the Museum's collection of early Italian painting is a beautifully-preserved and elaborately-framed altarpiece of the Madonna and Child with Angels by the Florentine painter Spinello Aretino (ca. 1350-1410), an important follower of Giotto. Executed shortly before 1410, the work displays the realism, solidity of form, and spatial depth which Giotto introduced to Italian painting.

An equally significant acquisition of 1977 is a realistic portrayal of The Weeping Heraclitus, dated 1621, by the Dutch artist Hendrick Terbrugghen (1588-1629), an early and important Northern follower of the revolutionary Italian baroque painter Caravaggio. A lesser-known aspect of baroque painting--reflecting the 17th-century interest in demonology--is illustrated by four scenes of witchcraft and sorcery by Salvator Rosa (1615-1673), a highly imaginative Italian artist whose savage and sublime landscapes influenced many 19th-century romantic painters.

The collection of 19th-century French painting was greatly strengthened by a generous gift of nine paintings from Mr. and Mrs. Noah L. Butkin. Particularly important are Madame Henry Lerolle and Daughter Yvonne, perhaps the most successful portrait by Albert Besnard (1849-1934), a renowned French painter of women;

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The Boatyard of 1876, a powerful industrial scene by the social realist painter Jean-Charles Cazin (1841-1901); and Landscape with Satyr of 1841, a previously unknown landscape masterpiece by Célestin Nanteuil (1813-1873), an artist hitherto known chiefly for his book illustrations and prints. Four other fine paintings were given by the Butkins, notably a portrait by the Dutch artist Govaert Flinck (1615-1660), one of Rembrandt's most gifted students, and a scene of peasant life by the Flemish painter David Teniers the Younger (1610-1690).

The most important modern painting purchased during the past year was Church Street El of 1920, a famous early work by the American "precisionist" painter Charles Sheeler (1883-1965). The modern art department also received as gifts paintings by three important living artists: Jim Dine, Janet Fish, and Raphael Soyer, as well as The Meeting, an oil of 1938 by the American social realist painter William Gropper who died in 1977.

Three superb objects of Greek origin were added to the collection of ancient art. Augmenting the Museum's internationally-recognized collection of classical bronzes is a small but magnificent statuette of a youth, originally mounted on a horse or dolphin (now lost), executed around 440 BC. A red-figured terra cotta rhyton (drinking cup) in the form of a mule's head, dating from approximately 475 BC, is one of the two finest of more than twenty known examples of its type.

The Museum's first piece of Greek silver, a skyphos or shallow cup dating from the 3rd to 2nd century BC, was given by Mr. and Mrs. Max Ratner. Although the cup is of a typical shape, the handles terminating in flowers at the top and ivy leaves at the bottom appear to be unique in Greek silver.

Also of unusual design is a recently acquired Egyptian garment fragment dating from the 5th or 6th century. The style of the variously costumed figures on the garment is completely different from the usual repertory of designs found on Egyptian garments surviving from this period.

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A rare early Gothic sculpture was acquired for the medieval collection-- a marble tomb effigy of an abbot from the ruined Cerne Abbey in Dorsetshire, England. Although the figure, which dates from the second quarter of the 13th century, is damaged, it is masterfully carved and the only example in the United States of this type of English medieval sculpture. Also added to the medieval collection was a beautifully detailed copper gilt and enamel processional cross thought to have been made in Florence in the second half of the 14th century, a gift from Mrs. Chester D. Tripp, and an early 14th-century Austrian grisaille glass church window, a gift of Mrs. Ella Brummer.

One of the most interesting decorative objects acquired during the past year is a silver-mounted cup of carved coconut depicting scenes of life in tropical America, made in England or the Netherlands in the late 17th century. The cup is a gift from Mrs. Warren H. Corning and was a significant loan to The European Vision of America exhibition on view at the Museum in 1976.

During 1977 the Museum acquired both its earliest and latest examples of American sculpture. The earliest works are a pair of sensitively modeled marble bas-reliefs of angels, representing Morning and Evening, by Erastus Dow Palmer (1817-1904). The most recent work, a gift of Isamu Noguchi, is a scale model in four-inch diameter steel pipe of Portal, his monumental sculpture for Cleveland's Justice Center.

A wide range of prints and drawings were accessioned this past year. Particularly fine are a 1733 drawing of The Fox and the Turkey Hens for the Fables of La Fontaine by the French artist Jean-Baptiste Oudry (1686-1755) and a monotype by Edgar Degas entitled In the Salon. Also noteworthy are a Rembrandt etching, The Third Oriental Head, and a hand-colored woodcut from a 15th-century Netherlandish blockbook of the Apocalypse. Drawings by contemporary American artists Louise Nevelson and Jeanette Pasin Sloan were among a number of gifts from The Print Club of Cleveland.

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An outstanding new work in the Oriental collection is a Chinese bronze horse less than three inches high dating from the Warring States Period (3rd century BC). The realistic modeling of the head and legs are extraordinary in a work of such early date and diminutive size. Among other significant Chinese acquisitions are a silver raft-cup (depicting a famous Han Dynasty explorer in a raft formed from a tree stump), dated 1345, once in the collection of the Emperor Ch'ien-lung, and a subtly colored hanging scroll of swimming carp by the Ming court painter Liu Chieh. Also extremely important is an early 13th-century handscroll showing the silk-making process from the cultivation of the worms to the weaving of the silk.

Added to a collection of objects used in the Japanese Noh drama was a well-preserved 15th-century example of the wooden mask, with movable chin and beard, worn by the Okina or old man who traditionally introduces the Noh drama. A small but superb hanging scroll of Two Men Observing a Waterfall, by the early 16th-century Japanese artist Sōami, strengthens the Museum's collection of Japanese ink painting, one of the finest outside Japan.

An important new Indian sculpture is a carved Mathura sandstone pillar from the railing of a Buddhist stupa dating from the late 2nd century. The bacchanalian scene depicted on the pillar, and the Hellenistic details of costume and drinking vessels, show classical influences unusual in sculpture of the Mathura school. Also Indian, dating from the 3rd century BC, is an elaborately carved stone ring, four inches in diameter, believed to have served as a fertility symbol.

With the exception of prints, drawings, and photographs, which are displayed in the Prints and Drawings Galleries on the ground floor, works in the Year in Review are installed in the upper level exhibition gallery. Gallery talks on the exhibition will be given at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 11, and Sunday, January 15.

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